

REMARKS

Favorable reconsideration, reexamination, and allowance of the present patent application are respectfully requested in view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks.

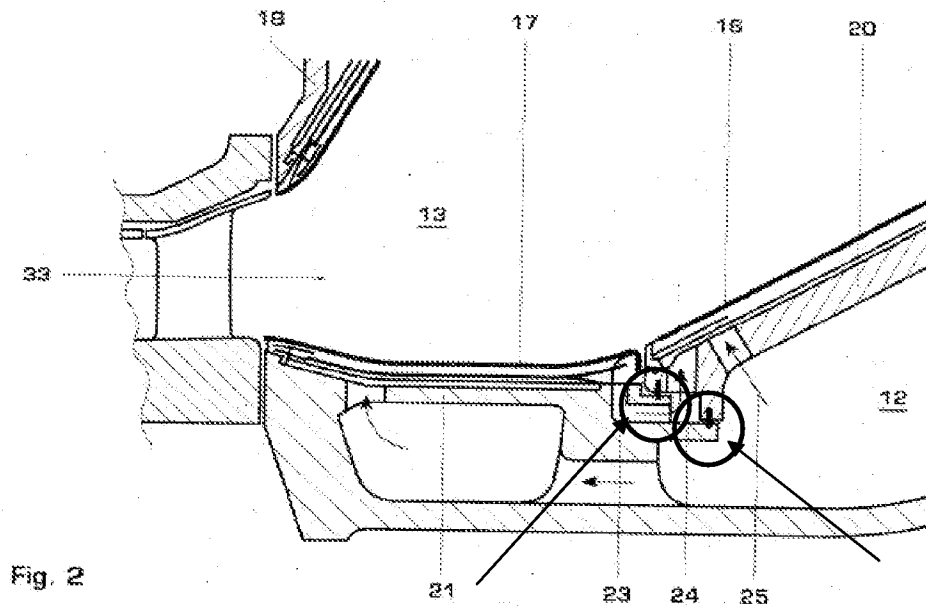
Objection to the Drawings

At page 2 of the Office Action, Figure 3 of the drawings was objected to because it illustrates only the prior art, without the legend indicating as such. Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration of this objection, in view of the attached Replacement Sheet including Fig. 3, in which its legend now indicates that it is "Prior Art".

Rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 102

In the Office Action, beginning at page 2, Claims 1-11 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102, as reciting subject matters that allegedly are anticipated by the prior art. More specifically, Claims 1-9 and 11 were rejected under section 102(e) over Published U.S. Patent Application No. 2002/0116929, invented by Snyder; Claims 1-11 were rejected under section 102(b) over German patent no. 3435611, invented by Scott; and Claims 1-7, 9, and 11 were rejected under section 102(b) over U.S. Patent No. 6047552, issued to Gross *et al.* ("Gross"). Claims 1-11 were rejected under section 102(b) over German patent no. 19727407, invented by Krebs. Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration of these rejections.

This patent application describes annular combustors for gas turbines embodying principles of the present invention. As illustrated in the exemplary embodiment of Fig. 2, reproduced herein to better assist in an understanding of aspects of the present invention, the liner segments are subdivided in the axial direction into a plurality of parts, arranged one behind the other. The liner segments 16, 17 are fastened to the inner walls of segment carriers 18,...,21. These segment carriers 18,...,21 are divided into separate parts, which simplifies assembly of the combustor (see page 5 of this application). The divided segment carriers are easily be seen in Fig. 2, which has been slightly annotated to indicate the carriers:



The lower segment carriers 20 and 21 of Fig. 2 are clearly separated and the gap between them is sealed by means of, *e.g.*, two seals marked by circles in the drawing above.

Snyder, Scott, Gross, and Krebs each fail to identically disclose such a liner configuration with separated segment carriers as recited in the combinations of the pending claims.

Claim 1 relates to an annular combustor having a combination of features including, *inter alia*, a plurality of segment carriers, the liner segments being fastened to the segment carriers, the segment carriers being subdivided in the axial direction into a plurality of parts. Claim 1 includes the subject matter of Claim 5.

Snyder describes outer and inner liners 34, 32 including an outer and inner single piece support shell 44 or 58, respectively (see page 2, par. [0024]).

Scott discloses (see Fig. 3) an outer and inner shell 26 and 28, which includes sections 26a,b welded together by means of a welding seam 90, and is therefore a single piece.

Gross (Fig. 2, 3) discloses a heat shield having a plurality of heat shield components 1, which are disposed on a continuous supporting structure 17.

Krebs describes a heat shield for a gas turbine flame tube which includes a wall 4 having

cooling air channels 5 extending normal to the wall surface for impact cooling of heat resistance plates 7 spaced on one side of the wall and which have a number of effusion cooling channels 8 piercing the plates for effusion cooling. The cooling air channels for impact cooling have nozzle-type narrowed outlet orifices 6, and the effusion cooling channels specifically extend obliquely through the plates, the edges of which are sealed relative to one another and/or against the wall. Metal sealing springs 13 are specifically arranged in lateral slots 12 in the edges 11 of the plates.

Accordingly, each of *Snyder*, *Scott*, *Gross*, and *Krebs* fails to disclose a liner segment and segment carriers as recited in the combinations of the pending claims.

For at least the foregoing reasons, Applicant respectfully submits that the subject matters of Claims 1-11 are not anticipated by *Snyder*, *Scott*, *Gross*, or *Krebs*, are therefore not unpatentable under 35 U.S.C. § 102, and therefore respectfully requests withdrawal of the rejection thereof under 35 U.S.C. § 102.

Rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

In the Office Action, beginning at page 7, Claim 9 was were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a), as reciting subject matter that allegedly is obvious, and therefore allegedly unpatentable, over *Snyder* in view of the disclosure of U.S. Patent No. 5,435,127, issued to Luffy *et al.* (“Luffy”). Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration of this rejection.

Luffy, like *Snyder*, *Scott*, *Gross*, and *Krebs*, fails to disclose, describe, or suggest liner segments and segment carriers as recited in the combinations of the pending claims. Accordingly, even if properly combined with *Snyder*, the resulting hypothetical construct would still not include each and every limitation recited in Claims 1 and 9.

For at least the foregoing reasons, Applicant respectfully submits that the subject matter of Claim 9, taken as a whole, would not have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of Applicant’s invention, is therefore not unpatentable under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a), and therefore respectfully requests withdrawal of the rejection thereof under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a).

Conclusion

Applicant respectfully submits that this patent application is in condition for allowance. An early indication of the allowability of this application is therefore respectfully solicited.

If the patent examiner believes that a telephone conference with the undersigned would expedite passage of this patent application to issue, they are invited to call on the number below.

It is not believed that extensions of time are required, beyond those that may otherwise be provided for in accompanying documents. If, however, additional extensions of time are necessary to prevent abandonment of this application, then such extensions of time are hereby petitioned under 37 C.F.R. § 1.136(a), and the Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge fees necessitated by this paper, and to credit all refunds and overpayments, to our Deposit Account 50-2821.

Respectfully submitted,

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